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RETAIL PRICES - JUNE QUARTER 1939.

FOOD AND RENT (4 AND 5 ROOMED HOUSES) "B" SERIES.

Index numbers for June quarter 1939 (with base 1000 in 1923-27 for the six State Capitals) were Brisbane 853, Toowoomba 826, Rockhampton 841, Townsville 919, Bundaberg 802, Charters Towers 799 and Warwick 778.

From March quarter 1939 to June quarter 1939 there were decreases in this index in all seven cities, the percentages being Brisbane 1.95, Toowoomba 1.90, Rockhampton 1.52, Townsville 1.61, Bundaberg 1.35, Charters Towers 1.84, and Warwick 0.38. Food and grocery costs were lower in all cities. The rent index rose slightly in Brisbane, Townsville, and Warwick, and fell in Toowoomba, and Charters Towers. There was no change in rents in Rockhampton or Bundaberg. In Brisbane the chief decrease in price between the months of March and June was that for potatoes (from 1/lbd. to 8d. per 7 lb.). Beef, mutton and pork prices declined about $\frac{1}{4}$ d. a lb.. Eggs were about 3d. a dozen dearer. The weighted average rent of 4 and 5 roomed houses rose slightly from 229.70d. to 230.06d. between February and May.

Compared with June quarter 1938 the percentage increases in the Food and Rent Indexes were Brisbane 2.28, Toowoomba 2.74, Rockhampton 1.82, Townsville 2.22, Bundaberg 2.82, Charters Towers 7.25, and Warwick 8.96. Food and Grocery Indexes were higher in all cities than a year earlier and rents also increased. In Brisbane the Food index was up 2.51 per cent, and the rent index 2.03 per cent. Bread, flour, jam, raisins, and onions were dearer in June 1939 than in June 1938. Tea, potatoes, soap, eggs, bacon, mutton, and pork were cheaper. The average rent of 4 and 5 roomed houses rose from 225.48d. to 230.06d. between May 1938 and May 1939.

ALL ITEMS - "C" SERIES.

Index numbers for June quarter 1939 (with base 1000 in 1923-27 for the six State Capitals) were Brisbane 866, Toowoomba 855, Rockhampton 864, Townsville 915, Bundaberg 845, Charters Towers 871, and Warwick 830.

From March quarter 1939 to June quarter 1939 there were the following decreases in the "All Items" indexes; Brisbane 0.92 per cent, Toowoomba 0.93 per cent, Rockhampton 0.80 per cent, Townsville 0.87 per cent, Bundaberg 0.47 per cent, and Charters Towers 0.80 per cent. The Warwick index did not alter. Food and grocery costs were lower in all cities. Clothing and footwear were slightly dearer in all cities except Rockhampton, where there was no change, and the miscellaneous group items were also higher in price except for a small decline in Townsville. In Brisbane percentage variations in the indexes were food and groceries - 3.05, rent + 0.12, clothing and footwear + 0.48, and miscellaneous (consisting of household drapery, household utensils, fuel, light, union dues, fares, newspapers etc.) + 0.42.

Compared with June quarter 1938, the "C" index was higher in all Cities. The percentage increases were Brisbane 1.88, Toowoomba 1.30, Rockhampton 1.17, Townsville 1.55, Bundaberg 1.44, Charters Towers 4.19, and Warwick 5.20. Increases were registered in all cities for food and groceries, rent, and clothing. The miscellaneous group showed rises in Brisbane, Charters Towers, and Warwick, and decreases in Toowoomba, Rockhampton, Townsville, and Bundaberg. In Brisbane food and grocery costs increased 2.51 per cent, rent 2.03 per cent, clothing and footwear 1.22 per cent, and miscellaneous 0.84 per cent.

Compared with March quarter 1933, when the Brisbane index reached the lowest point recorded in the depression years (747), the index was higher by 15.93 per cent.

COMPARISON OF COSTS IN THE QUEENSLAND CITIES.

The following table shows the amounts necessary in June quarter 1939 to purchase what would have cost £1 in Brisbane.

City	All Items	Food and Groceries	Rent	Clothing and Footwear
			(4 and 5 Rooms)	
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Brisbane	1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0
Toowoomba	19. 9	19. 2	19. 7	19.11
Rockhampton	19.11	1. 1. 0	17. 8	1. 0. 4
Townsville	1. 1. 2	1. 2. 5	1. 0. 2	1. 0. 3
Bundaberg	19. 6	1. 1. 3	15. 0	1. 0. 4
Charters Towers	1. 0. 1	1. 2. 9	12. 4	1. 0. 6
Warwick	19. 2	1. 0. 1	15. 4	19.11

COMPARISON OF COMMONWEALTH AND STATES BASIC WAGES.

In the following statement the present State Basic Wage of £4. 4. 0 in Brisbane is compared in the first column with the amounts required to purchase the same amount of commodities in the other capitals. The second column shows the actual State Basic wages and the third the actual Commonwealth Basic wages in the capitals. All comparisons are on the basis of June quarter 1939 index numbers.

Capital	Equivalent of £4. 4. 0 in Brisbane	State Basic Wage	Commonwealth Basic Wage
	a.	b.	c
Brisbane	4. 4. 0	4. 4. 0	3.16. 0
Sydney	4.10. 5	d.	4. 1. 0
Melbourne	4. 9. 4	e.	4. 1. 0
Adelaide	4. 8. 1	3.18. 0	3.18. 0
Perth	4. 7. 8	4. 2. 2	3.17. 0
Hobart	4. 8. 0	e.	3.17. 0

- a. Based on "All Items" index ("C" Series).
- b. Current Rates.
- c. Corresponding to June quarter "Court" index numbers with the addition of the special loadings. To be operative from beginning of first pay period in September.
- d. The Basic Wage of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration is adopted in State awards.
- e. No State wage actually declared but follows Commonwealth rates to a large extent.

RETAIL PRICES INDEXES.

Table No. 1. FOOD, GROCERIES AND RENT (4 AND 5 ROOMED HOUSES) - "B" SERIES.

(Base = 1000 in 1923-27 in Six State Capitals)

CITY	Year Ending Decr. 1928	Year Ending Decr. 1938	Year Ending June 1939	QUARTERS ENDING				
				June 1938	Sept. 1938	Decr. 1938	March 1939	June 1939
Brisbane ..	901	838	852	834	845	839	870	853
Toowoomba ..	833	806	821	804	814	802	842	826
Rockhampton ..	858	825	837	826	829	823	854	841
Townsville ..	1047	900	916	899	905	906	934	919
Bundaberg ..	(b)	781	799	780	791	788	813	802
Weighted Average -								
Five Towns (a)	892	837	851	834	844	838	869	853
Charters Towers	942	751	783	745	756	763	814	799
Warwick ..	841	732	768	714	754	758	781	778

Table No. 2.

THE "ALL ITEMS" INDEX - "C" SERIES.

(Base = 1000 in 1923-27 in Six State Capitals)

CITY	Year Ending Decr. 1928	Year Ending Decr. 1938	Year Ending June 1939	QUARTERS ENDING				
				June 1938	Sept. 1938	Decr. 1938	March 1939	June 1939
Brisbane ..	917	852	863	850	858	855	874	866
Toowoomba ..	906	843	851	844	846	839	863	855
Rockhampton	903	853	861	854	857	852	871	864
Townsville ..	1023	902	912	901	905	906	923	915
Bundaberg ..	(b)	831	841	833	835	834	849	845
Weighted Average -								
Five Towns (a)	915	854	864	853	859	856	875	867
Charters Towers	925	839	860	836	843	848	878	871
Warwick ..	914	800	822	789	813	816	830	830

(a) Prior to 1937 the five towns in the weighted averages included Charters Towers and Warwick which have now been replaced by Townsville and Bundaberg.

(b) Prices for Bundaberg were not collected prior to September Quarter 1936.

Table No. 3.

AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES - FOOD AND GROCERIES

Brisbane.

Commodity and Unit of Quantity	MONTH OF			Commodity and Unit of Quantity	MONTH OF		
	June 1938	March 1939	June 1939		June 1938	March 1939	June 1939
	d.	d.	d.		d.	d.	d.
Bread .. 2 lb.	5.23	5.50	5.50	Milk .. 1 qt.	6.00	6.00	6.00
Flour .. 2 lb.	3.50	4.05	4.05	Bacon (Rashers) 1 lb.	14.68	14.50	14.50
Tea .. 1 lb.	27.05	26.95	26.95	Beef - Sirloin			
Sugar .. 1 lb.	3.98	3.98	3.98	Roast .. 1 lb.	8.65	8.75	8.40
Jam (Plum) 1½ lb.	8.02	8.15	8.15	Beef - Steak			
Raisins .. 1 lb.	10.27	10.64	10.55	Rump .. 1 lb.	11.25	11.50	11.25
Potatoes .. 7 lb.	10.23	22.82	8.18	Beef - Rolled			
Onions .. 1 lb.	1.66	3.73	3.93	Brisket .. 1 lb.	5.55	5.60	5.40
Soap .. 1 lb.	6.33	6.15	6.15	Mutton - Leg 1 lb.	7.85	7.65	7.40
Butter .. 1 lb.	19.00	19.00	19.00	Mutton - Chops			
Cheese .. 1 lb.	13.27	13.27	13.27	Loin .. 1 lb.	7.95	7.60	7.40
Eggs .. 1 doz.	26.55	19.27	22.64	Pork - Leg 1 lb.	11.10	11.45	11.05